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Monday, 25 October 2010, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Rugunda	(Uganda)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Mayr-Harting
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Vukašinović
	Brazil	Mrs. Viotti
	China	Mr. Wang Min
	France	Mr. Araud
	Gabon	Mr. Issoze-Ngondet
	Japan	Mr. Sumi
	Lebanon	Mr. Salam
	Mexico	Mr. Puente
	Nigeria	Mr. Onemola
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Turkey	Mr. Apakan
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Ms. Anderson

Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2010/543)

Report of the Secretary-General on the Sudan (S/2010/528)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) (S/2010/543)

Report of the Secretary-General on the Sudan (S/2010/528)

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Alain Le Roy, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Le Roy to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

I wish to draw the attention of members to the report of the Secretary-General on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, contained in document S/2010/543. At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Le Roy, to whom I now give the floor.

Mr. Le Roy (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, I would like to thank you for the opportunity afforded me to present to the Security Council the situation in the Sudan at a time when the Council is considering the latest reports of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS) (S/2010/528) and on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) (S/2010/543).

As everyone knows, we are less than three months away from the referendum, and the Sudan has entered a crucial period. In addition to the political and security challenges that are inherent to the referendum process, other challenges, such as the situation in Darfur and the difficulties of the Doha peace process, remain. In this presentation, I would like to highlight the key points of the reports and to inform the Council of the very latest developments in the Sudan.

There has been visible progress in the preparation of the referendum for Southern Sudan, but very little time remains. On 11 October, the President of the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission, Mr. Khalil, and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Menkerios, co-presided the first meeting of the policy committee of the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission, in which representatives of the Governments of both Southern Sudan and the Sudan participated.

The committee expressly requested that the Commission finalize its operational plan, including the schedule for the referendums and the budget. It also asked the Commission to clarify the criteria for the registration of Southern Sudanese living in the north.

UNMIS continues to provide technical, logistical and advisory assistance to the Commission and is deploying several hundred additional personnel to support this action. UNAMID will also support the Commission by setting up voter registration and polling centres in Darfur. In the meantime, formal invitations to the monitor the referendum were addressed to interested organizations, such as the African Union, the League of Arab States, the European Union, the Carter Center and other organizations.

The Referendum Commission has now reached agreement on the schedule for the preparation of the referendum in Southern Sudan, especially the registration of voters. Registration will start on 14 November and end on 30 November. The voter register will be finalized by 31 December. The International Foundation for Electoral Systems and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have provided manuals on the drawing up of electoral lists and other materials, which should arrive in the Sudan before the end of October. A great deal of these materials has already reached the country.

There will be close to 3,600 registration centres in the Sudan, but, since all the sites have not been decided yet, additional material has been pre-positioned to deal with any eventualities. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has drawn up its operational modalities and is determining what resources are necessary for registering Sudanese voters living abroad.

The vote will take place in eight countries besides the Sudan. Additional resources will be necessary for the IOM, so as to ensure that voting abroad takes place in a timely manner.

The question of national financing presents a major obstacle to the preparations. The Referendum Commission had initially drawn up a global budget of $370 million, but the first funds have only just been transferred. The Government of Southern Sudan has recently declared that it had organized the transfer of $51 million, the equivalent of its contribution, if one excludes purely security-related aspects.

The Government of the Sudan only last week provided the first $8.5 million, as it awaits an opportunity to consider the detailed budget proposal that was submitted by the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission. This delay has severely limited the implementation of concrete measures for the registration of voters, including the training and recruitment of 12,000 voting officials, which has barely begun. An international financial support system has been set up. The fund administered by the UNDP has received $58.5 million for the referendum in Southern Sudan and $8.1 million for the referendum in Abyei. But the referendum is first and foremost a national exercise and cannot be implemented without agreement on national financing.

Serious concerns remain about Southern Sudanese living in the north. Recently, high-level members of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM)/National Congress Party declared that Southern Sudanese living in the north could lose their citizenship, access to health services and their right to property ownership, if Southern Sudan were to secede. In the meanwhile, in Southern Sudan, numerous reports have stated that there have been acts of intimidation committed by the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) against pro-unity groups. It is essential that the Governments of both Southern Sudan and the Sudan should guarantee conditions that would enable voters to freely express their will without any outside pressure.

In the meantime, at the political level, there is a significant movement towards reconciliation between the stakeholders in Southern Sudan. On 6 October, President Salva Kiir pardoned Generals Athor Deng and Gabriel Tanginye, as well as Colonel Gatluak Gai and a number of military chiefs who had been opposed to the SPLM. Following those pardons, General Tanginye officially joined the SPLM. It is possible that General Athor might do the same.

During the All-Southern Sudanese Political Parties' Conference last week, from 13 to 16 October, all of the parties of Southern Sudan, including the SPLM, committed to abiding by a code of conduct during the period leading up to the referendum that would guarantee the freedom to campaign and equal access to the media by pro-independence and pro-unity parties. The SPLM has also undertaken to set up a multiparty government following the referendum, which would include representatives of all opposition parties and has agreed on the presidency of President Salva Kiir during its transition period.

We remain deeply alarmed by the absence of any progress on the referendum in Abyei. The Abyei Referendum Commission has not yet been set up, and the voter registry criteria remain to be defined. Earlier this month, the parties to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement met in Addis Ababa to discuss options that would enable them to overcome the obstacles to the implementation of the Abyei Protocol. Even if no agreement was reached, the parties have, however, agreed to meet again at the end of October under the auspices of the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel under President Mbeki, and in the presence, of course, of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Menkerios, and the United States delegation. They will also discuss a number of important subjects, such as the demarcation of the border and a number of post-referendum arrangements to achieve a consolidated solution, which would include the issue of Abyei. It is absolutely essential that the parties reach an agreement during those negotiations. As long as there is no agreement, tension continues to increase on a daily basis in Abyei.

The panel appointed by the Secretary-General to monitor the referendums in Southern Sudan and the Abyei area carried out its first visit to the Sudan from 10 to 15 October. This panel, presided over, as Council members know, by President Mkapa, has met a great many of the stakeholders, including the highest authorities, and it stated that it was alarmed by the delays in the preparations for the referendum in Southern Sudan and by the mistrust between the parties. It urged both Governments to immediately allocate the necessary funds to draw up electoral lists. The panel has identified a number of technical issues

that require an urgent solution, including the finalization of the schedule, the number and placement of electoral registration offices, the clarification on the requirements for registration and the recruitment and deployment of registration personnel. In addition, the panel expressed its alarm regarding the absence of progress on the conduct of the referendum in the Abyei area. Of course, the panel remains ready to take action on all these issues, including through its good offices.

We remain alarmed by the absence of significant progress as far as the referendums in Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan States are concerned. In Southern Kordofan, the results of the special census carried out earlier this year have not yet been announced, which delays the elections of the governors and members of regional parliaments. It is now clear that the Southern Kordofan Popular Consultation Commission will not finalize its work before 9 January 2011, the date set for the referendum. In the Blue Nile State, the Popular Consultation Commission was created on 18 September. It has not yet been in a position to achieve any progress in its work. Those troubling delays show the general lack of progress as far as the transition zones are concerned and the need to redouble our efforts to sustain the process and to meet the concerns of the population.

The security situation in the area of operation of UNMIS during this period remained relatively calm. It has tangibly improved since the elections. However, tensions rose at the beginning of October, when the Sudanese Armed Forces and the SPLA mutually accused each other of having strengthened their positions along the border between Unity State and Upper Nile State.

Due to the lack of cooperation between local commanders and limited land and air mobility, UNMIS was unable to fully verify the situation. However, the information that did come to us suggests that there has been no major military mobilization, even if the Sudanese Armed Forces and the SPLA seem to have heightened their level of preparation and reinforced their defensive positions along the borders between Unity State and Southern Kordofan State, the Upper Nile and the White Nile and near the south of the Blue Nile State and Abyei.

Given the scale of security risks and the mandate of UNMIS to back the referendum process, violations of freedom of movement of UNMIS remain a source of concern, and the Mission continues to raise that issue with authorities. On 6 October, the SPLA authorized UNMIS to carry out joint monitoring exercises in the area of operation until the referendum takes place. The division commanders of the SPLA have received orders to afford UNMIS complete freedom of movement. The southern Sudanese Police Service and the national intelligence and security units of Southern Sudan have since received the same orders.

Given the growing political and security tensions, UNMIS has developed a number of initiatives aimed at strengthening its assessment capacities and confronting the new security challenges. Those measures include strengthening conflict resolution mechanisms through increased involvement of the Joint Defence Board — the JDB — active participation of all levels of security forces, the Sudanese Armed Forces, the SPLA, the Sudanese police forces and Joint Integrated Units. Also, the number of patrols has increased, especially along the north-south border, and mobility has increased through military exercises.

Similar measures are now planned for the civil sections of UNMIS and the United Nations country team. As the Council is aware, UNMIS has also strengthened its military presence in Abyei, in particular by adding a platoon and by doubling its capacity to patrol.

In addition, UNMIS has finalized, in consultation with country team, the strategy for the protection of civilians, which allows the force to provide protection to United Nations personnel so they can carry out initiatives for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in the 10 States in Southern Sudan and in the transition areas. UNMIS will certainly provide protection, to the extent its capacities allow, to international humanitarian actors and to the population at risk in order to facilitate humanitarian assistance. The country team has also set up contingency plans that include mechanisms designed to respond to a possible increase in population displacements and humanitarian needs and is currently pre-positioning foodstuffs and other reserves.

During the Security Council's recent visit to the Sudan, Vice-President Salva Kiir warned of the serious risk of violence during the referendum and recommended the creation of a buffer zone between the north and the south. As everyone knows, that has given

rise to a great many questions regarding a possible reinforcement of UNMIS, especially along the borders.

We are currently considering several options to increase the UNMIS presence in high-risk zones along the border, especially in traditional migration zones or those where population movements could take place. One option would be to re-deploy troops based in other areas of Southern Sudan. That, however, would weaken UNMIS' capacity to assist in the preparations for the referendum and to provide security for the process.

Another option would be to request an increase in the number of authorized troops and to deploy additional contingents near zones that have been identified as sensitive. We are currently examining those options, in consultation, of course, with the various parties. If necessary, we will return to the Council with proposals, after having consulted with parties on the ground.

However, it remains important to recognize that an increase in the number of troops would not enable UNMIS to prevent or even contain a head-on confrontation between the two armies. Our best weapon against a return to war is and remains our commitment to a political agreement, that is, the agreement of the parties on key unresolved issues. From that point of view, it is all the more urgent that progress be achieved during the upcoming meetings in Addis Ababa.

(*spoke in English*)

As the attention of the international community increasingly turns to the impending referendum, we must not lose focus on the acute challenges remaining in Darfur.

Since our previous report on Darfur, the number of armed confrontations between parties to the conflict has decreased. However, intermittent clashes have continued between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) in Northern and Southern Darfur, as well as between Sudanese Armed Forces and forces loyal to the Sudan Liberation Army-Abdul Wahid in Jebel Marra. Those clashes have inflicted a humanitarian toll on the civilian population. Aerial bombardments were used in mid-July as part of a Government campaign to dislodge JEM from the Abola Mountain and were reported, but not confirmed, in early October, in Jebel Marra.

During the reporting period, incidents of banditry, carjacking, ambushes and abductions of United Nations staff and humanitarian workers also continued. As I speak, one international staff member kidnapped the day the Council arrived in El Fasher, 7 October, remains in the custody of his kidnappers. The Government has not done enough to stem the culture of impunity for such attacks, which remains the norm. We have repeatedly reminded the Government and rebel movements that attacks on United Nations personnel constitute war crimes and that the perpetrators must be held accountable and brought to justice.

Since the outbreak of violence in Kalma camp in July, the situation there is calm, with no new fatalities. The 25,000 or so internally displaced persons (IDPs) displaced from the camp have now mostly returned. However, there have been some reports of clashes and shooting incidents. UNAMID has continued to maintain a reinforced presence, including round-the-clock patrolling in and around the camp and constant engagement of camp leaders and residents by UNAMID civilian teams. In Hamidiya, an IDP camp in Western Darfur where similar unrest took place in July, IDP leaders have agreed on locations for the construction of community policing centres, which will contribute to enhancing security.

Meanwhile, little progress has been made with regard to the five sheikhs seeking refuge in UNAMID's community policing centre in Kalma camp. We are continuing our discussions with the relevant authorities to find a mutually acceptable solution.

The violence that took place in Kalma and Hamadiya during the reporting period highlighted the problem of weapons and armed elements inside IDP camps, which violate humanitarian principles. UNAMID has initiated discussions with IDP leaders on that issue but has been clear to the Government it cannot be involved in the forcible disarmament of IDPs. The authorities in Southern Darfur have indicated their intention to relocate Kalma camp from its present location to nearby Beleil and to disarm the residents in the process. The Government has agreed, however, that any relocation should be voluntary and any disarmament effort non-coercive.

During the reporting period, a further serious security incident took place on 2 September, when an unidentified group of armed men attacked a market in the village of Tabarat in Northern Darfur, killing 37,

injuring 35 and resulting in the displacement of about 3,000 people to Tawilla. Reports indicate most of those killed were executed. Initial reports indicate that the incident was caused by a tribal dispute over blood money, but a Government investigation is ongoing. We have called upon the Government to finalize its investigation as soon as possible and bring the perpetrators of that heinous crime to justice. There was no improvement in most humanitarian indicators during the reporting period, owing to a combination of seasonal and conflict-related factors. Since the beginning of the year, more than 280,000 people have been displaced across Darfur, though fewer than half of that number have been verified so far, and most of this displacement has taken place in the South.

Meanwhile, humanitarian operations continued to be hampered by insecurity and operational constraints. Owing to insecurity, the World Food Programme (WFP) was unable to reach more than 435,000, or some 11 per cent, of its intended beneficiaries during the month of August.

In eastern Jebel Marra, both the Government and the SLA-Abdul Wahid have continued to deny the international community access, including in the context of alleged aerial bombardments in early October, which reportedly led to the displacement of thousands of civilians. However, some positive developments are also worth noting. On 15 and 16 September 2010, with UNAMID's support, UNICEF and the World Health Organization transported 114 tonnes of essential medication and nutritional relief, in the first inter-agency mission to Jebel Marra since February.

On 14 October, Council members expressed concern about the suspension of food distribution in Abu Shouk IDP camp in North Darfur, following their visit there. The WFP has confirmed that the suspension was in place only during the month of September, while an IDP verification exercise was conducted, and that the IDPs were informed in advance. Except for September, distribution has been ongoing on the basis of half-rations, as part of an overall strategy to shift from general food distribution to more targeted safety-net programmes for the most vulnerable. That approach is based on data collected since February 2009 indicating changes in the food security profile of IDP camps in Darfur.

The precarious human rights situation in Darfur also remains a consistent concern as a result of violations committed by the Government and rebel movements. A state of emergency still exists in Darfur, giving broad-based powers to the National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS), which are sometimes used with impunity, resulting in reports of arbitrary arrests, torture during detentions and a lack of due process.

Following the Council's visit to Abu Shouk, we have received reports that some of the IDPs who spoke to Council members had been arrested and intimidated, although such reports have been denied by the Government of Sudan. We are not in a position to provide names of the alleged victims, out of our concern to protect our sources from retaliation. However, we have urged the Government to release anyone being held and to guarantee the rights of IDPs to speak openly, without fear of intimidation.

With regard to the political process, Joint Chief Mediator Bassolé continues to work with the armed movements and the Government in Sudan to develop an inclusive and comprehensive peace agreement. On 19 October, the Joint Mediation, the Government of Sudan and the Liberation and Justice Movement (LJM) met in Doha to review the progress made by the negotiation committees. Although progress has been made in some areas, significant areas of disagreement remain, including issues involving the administrative status of Darfur, power-sharing and security arrangements and mechanisms for compensation, justice and reconciliation. The parties will continue to negotiate the outstanding issues for another week. Mr. Bassolé will subsequently work on compromise proposals in order to develop an agreement consistent with the principles endorsed in the 24 September high-level meeting, on which all belligerent parties and representatives of Darfur's various communities will be consulted.

In separate developments, Mr. Bassolé recently held meetings with Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) leader Khalil Ibrahim in Libya and Abdul Wahid al-Nur in Paris. JEM has indicated some willingness to resume its participation in the peace talks, if arrangements can be made for Khalil Ibrahim to visit Darfur. Abdul Wahid has also indicated a willingness to consider participation, conditional on international assistance to convene his field commanders.

The Joint Mediation continues its efforts to bring both groups to Doha and would appreciate the support

of Security Council members with influence in this regard. In the event that JEM and SLA-Abdul Wahid decide to participate, the Joint Mediation intends to delay presenting a draft agreement, so as to allow time to integrate other groups into the process.

In the meantime, although the Government has stated its ongoing commitment to the Doha talks, it has also made clear its preference for a domestication of the peace process. The notion of holding talks exclusively inside Darfur has been rejected by the movements in the current security environment. We have therefore continued to stress the need for both the engagement of the Darfur population and space for negotiations with movements that show themselves to be credible interlocutors. We have also stressed that peace is contingent on the Government's commitment to making significant concessions for the people of Darfur.

On the ground, UNAMID continues to support the peace process, particularly through efforts to facilitate the greater participation of Darfurians. UNAMID has also supported local-level peace initiatives and plans to facilitate a tribal reconciliation conference in November, involving tribes from South Darfur, Southern Bahr El Ghazal and Western Bahr El Ghazal states.

UNAMID continues to focus on its core mandated function of protecting civilians and providing a secure environment for humanitarian operations. In this regard, the Mission is strengthening its strategy for the protection of civilians, including through enhanced patrolling activities. New directives have already been issued to military and police components to patrol more robustly, and improvements seen in the Kalma and Hamadiya camps indicate that these efforts are bearing fruit.

However, restrictions on UNAMID's freedom of movement remain a significant constraint on the Mission's capacity to react and to maintain situational awareness, which are key to its mandate to protect civilians. During the reporting period, restrictions of the movement of UNAMID or United Nations agencies occurred on 26 occasions, and seven peacekeepers were injured as a result of armed attacks during UNAMID operations.

On 17 September, the Government endorsed a new political and security strategy for Darfur, focusing on five key areas: security, development, resettlement, reconciliation and negotiations. The strategy called for greater coordination with UNAMID, especially on protection and returns, and a shift from humanitarian assistance to development and support for returns. UNAMID is engaging with the Government on this strategy, in a manner consistent with its own mandate and the promotion of humanitarian principles. We continue to stress that success will require the Government to build confidence among the Darfur population by implementing long-overdue measures, including addressing insecurity and impunity, reigning in the powers of the NISS and making available development funds for Darfur.

The challenges ahead are multiple and grave. With respect to the referendum, time is running out for resolution of the many outstanding issues. While planning for the worst-case political and security scenarios continues, our core goal must be to prevent these from occurring by urging and supporting the parties to reach agreement on the process and on the basis for long-term peaceful coexistence, irrespective of the outcome. In this context and in view of the limited capacities of UNMIS to address widespread insecurity in Sudan, it is absolutely critical to underscore to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) parties their responsibility for the referendum process and the peaceful implementation of the final CPA benchmarks.

With regard to Darfur, the support of the Council is needed in several critical areas. First, as previously stated, the Government must do more to create an enabling environment for the implementation of UNAMID's mandate, including by tackling impunity and providing full freedom of movement.

Secondly, to move forward on the peace process ahead of the referendum, movements that remain outside the process must go beyond vague signals and demonstrate their serious intent to re-engage, including through a recommitment to a ceasefire. The Security Council should consider imposing consequences on those who continue to obstruct the process.

Thirdly, progress in Darfur depends on the Government's willingness to make maximum concessions in the peace negotiations and, in the meantime, to implement measures that will improve the lives of Darfurians and build their trust. As we collectively engage the Government on strategies for

resolving the Darfur conflict, we must clearly convey those responsibilities as our core message.

The President: I thank Mr. Le Roy for his briefing.

I should like to inform the Council that I have just received a letter from the representative of the Sudan, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Osman (Sudan) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of the Sudan.

Mr. Osman (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): It gives me pleasure, Sir, to warmly and sincerely congratulate you once again on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council. It is no surprise that the Council's programme of work for this month should be full of important items relating to Africa, including the recent debate on support to African Union peacekeeping operations (see S/PV.6409).

Earlier this month, a Security Council mission visited Uganda and the Sudan, through which the Council kept abreast of the facts of the situation in the Sudan, including with respect to the present strenuous efforts to complete the final phases of the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and to the intensive endeavours being made towards the achievement of sustainable and comprehensive peace in Darfur through my country's new strategy.

Today, the Council is meeting to review the most recent reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the CPA (S/2010/528) and on the situation in Darfur (S/2010/543). I take this opportunity to reaffirm to the Council our resolve to complete the final phases of the implementation of the Agreement, including the holding of a credible, impartial and transparent referendum reflecting the genuine will of the people of the South, free from pressure and political haggling. The referendum is not an end in itself; it is a way to buttress peace, stability and the ideal of coexistence — rather than war, which is something we never accepted willingly. We have accepted the path of self-determination with a view to ending war once and for all.

The report of the Secretary-General on progress in the implementation of the CPA clearly indicates the extent of our resolve and determination to fulfil the remaining provisions of the Agreement. Here I refer to the second paragraph of the final communiqué of the 24 September high-level meeting on the Sudan, which declared that the two parties to the CPA have been addressing numerous complex issues under difficult circumstances over the past five year. Now, with the same resolve and determination, we are pressing ahead with our efforts to resolve outstanding issues, including the status of Abyei, the demarcation of borders and the popular consultations in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile states.

It is clear that any attempt to hold a referendum before an acceptable settlement on the status of Abyei is achieved by the two parties would mean only a return to war. The Government of the Sudan has made all possible concessions with a view to achieving a settlement that takes account of the legitimate and inalienable rights of the two largest ethnic groups in the area: the Misseriya and Dinka Ngok tribes. Reason and wisdom are required, not rashness or recklessness.

That is true of the issue of border demarcation as well. The Council has many examples of the secession of nations and States, with wars continuing and escalating precisely because of the lack of border agreements. We do not believe that the Council has any wish for additional similar issues.

Turning to post-referendum arrangements, the Council knows that in signing the memorandum of understanding in Mekelle, Ethiopia, on 23 June, we were seriously determined to undertake serious and objective negotiations on those arrangements, including with respect to wealth-sharing, citizenship, security and international legal instruments. Those matters were considered exhaustively in a joint workshop on 19 July, with high-level participation by a team from the African Union and the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS). Four working groups were established to discuss those matters and to

establish a schedule for continued work, including on technical and procedural details.

With respect to the current security situation in Southern Sudan, we agree with paragraphs 22 to 25 of the report of the Secretary-General (S/2010/528) that the current security situation in Southern Sudan is alarming. That is particularly true of the humanitarian situation, in the light of the "hunger gap" to which the report refers in paragraph 49 and the increase in acute malnutrition. These are all Sudanese citizens, and we care about all of them.

The report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Darfur and on progress in the fulfilment of the mandate of UNAMID (S/2010/543) is also before the Council. In that regard, I remind members that seeing is different from hearing. Council members saw with 30 eyes and heard with 30 ears and learned about the situation on the ground and about daily life in the Abu Shouk and Zam Zam camps, which is not very different from that in the El Fasher camp with respect to food and drinking water. Enabling all those civilians to return to their villages and lead normal lives is among the top priorities that the Government is trying hard to achieve through its new strategy for Darfur.

Council members heard a comprehensive briefing on this in its meetings with senior officials, including Vice-President Ali Osman Mohammed Taha, Foreign Minister Ali Ahmed Karti and the high-level team. Before that, the mission heard a detailed presentation by Mr. Osman Yousif Kibir, Governor of Northern Darfur and members of his government. The strategy on Darfur accords special attention to fighting impunity, particularly since those who carry out attacks and robberies against humanitarian and peace workers are members of armed bands of hooligans. The Government is trying to bring them to justice by all possible means.

The report before the Council reflects an intensive internal political effort, embodied in the new Government strategy aimed at making peace a reality and providing the conditions for voluntary return, security and stability. It also reflects the internal work of Darfur's civil society, represented in various categories of national and tribal leaders, as well as previous work with Darfur's elected leaders and members of the judiciary and executive branches: the true representatives of Darfur.

The second track is the current joint mediation efforts hosted by Qatar, in Doha, under the leadership of Joint Chief Mediator Djibril Bassolé and with the valued support of Sudan's neighbouring States. Now we are approaching the culmination of these efforts: a sustainable and comprehensive peace agreement will be reached in Doha in a matter of days. The missing link in this process remains the role of the Security Council in pushing ahead on the political track and obliging those who reject the option of peace to immediately join the negotiations in Doha. We therefore appeal to the Council to force those rebel forces that did not join the Doha process to join it in negotiations aimed at ending the conflict and the war.

Finally, we heard Under-Secretary-General Le Roy speak of the options for enhancing the United Nations Mission in the Sudan in the light of prospective developments. I believe we heard him speak of the option of increasing troop levels. In this connection, I would like to say that the optimal solution is to assist the parties in reaching a satisfactory solution to outstanding matters, not to increase troop levels. That is not because we reject an increase in troop levels, but rather because such an increase will not resolve the matter or help the parties to achieve a settlement. There is still time for the Council to use its weight and wisdom to urge the parties to achieve a satisfactory solution. We have a significant opportunity to do so at the upcoming November meeting in Addis Ababa. Here, I appeal to Council members not to opt for measures that would lead to more spending, wasting funds that could be saved and used for projects that would be in the interest of the entire international community.

I would like once again to emphasize that the Government of the Sudan, together with the Council, will press ahead constructively with its commitment to finding a satisfactory solution to all pending matters, regarding both Darfur and Southern Sudan.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.55 a.m.